

Letter to My Favorite Author

Objective: After reading a realistic fiction story, the student will write a letter to the author.

Standard: Uses the general skills and strategies of the writing process

Benchmark: Writes business letters and letters of request and response (i.e. uses business-letter format; states purpose of the letter; relates opinions, problems, requests, or compliments; uses precise vocabulary)

Skill Development: Writing a letter

Organization: Whole-class activity, independent work

Materials

- computer with Internet Access
- paper and pens for writing letters
- envelopes
- stamps
- student copies of “Letter to My Favorite Author” (following page)

Procedure

1. After reading a novel, encourage your students to write letters to the author. While e-mail may be a quick means of communication, students also need practice in writing formal letters. By writing a letter to an author, students will take time to compose their thoughts and master the form of writing a letter.
2. There are many ways to find an author’s address. You can enter an author’s name on an Internet search engine. This should lead to a publisher’s page listing an address to send mail to the author. You can also find publisher addresses in the book. Publishers can forward the letters to the author.
3. Guide your students as they complete the “Letter to My Favorite Author” page and write their letters.
4. Students need to feel that their work has meaning. Be sure to mail the letters your students write. The letters should not be viewed as simply a homework assignment or classroom exercise to be added to the student’s portfolio. (If you do wish to add the letters to the student’s portfolio, make a copy and send the original letter to the author.) Be sure to have students use your school address as a return address in order to protect their privacy.

Letter to My Favorite Author *(cont.)*

All of us enjoy receiving comments about our writing. Authors want to know what you think about their books, too. Did you like the ending? Would you have written a different ending? Would you like the author to write a sequel?

1. Write a letter to the author of a realistic fiction story that you enjoyed.
2. In your letter, tell the author why you liked this book. Tell the author if you would like to read a sequel to this book.
3. You may wish to ask the author some of the following questions:
 - How did you get the idea for this book?
 - Did you model the main character after someone you know?
 - How long did it take you to write this book?
 - Do you write at home or in an office building?
 - How much time do you spend writing each day?
 - Do you like to write in the morning, afternoon, or evening?
 - Do you write with pen and paper or do you use a computer to write your stories?
4. Use the format shown below to write your letter.

Street Address
City, State, Zip Code

Date

_____ ,
Salutation

Body of the Letter

Closing,
Signature